

# WILD NEWS

Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge

Nature Program Calendar January - March 2005

## The Bald Eagle - *Front Range Migrant and Resident*

Jennifer Keyser

The bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) is found only in North America. It is one of our continent's largest raptors. They measure about 30 inches in length and the wingspan is 72-84 inches. Adult males weigh about 8 to 9 pounds. The females are slightly larger, about 10 to 14 pounds. Bald eagles were placed on the U.S. Endangered Species List in 1967. They were downlisted to threatened in 1995 in all states except Alaska.

The Arsenal's relationship with this species began in 1986 when a communal roost of bald eagles was discovered on First Creek. This discovery prompted involvement from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In the winter, bald eagles are regular visitors to the Refuge. Most birds arrive around the third week in January when their numbers are the highest at the communal nightly roost. In the last few years, the count

during peak viewing time has been as many as 22 birds. The number peaks as birds migrate from southern Canada and states north of Colorado. Eagles migrate south when their preferred food, fish and waterfowl, becomes unavailable (i.e. the lakes freeze up). There are local Front Range birds as well. At least ten eagle nests exist along the Northern Front Range.

Towards the end of winter, adult breeding pairs will leave the roosts and fly back to their nesting sites. Sub-adult non-breeders will remain longer. The breeding pair at the Refuge will stay at the communal roost through January before roosting in their nesting territory. The female should lay eggs around mid-February. Service biologists hope the pair will continue to be successful with

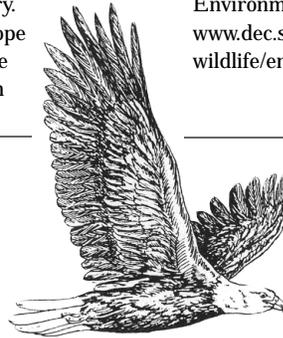
their breeding, having hatched two chicks last year in late March. (The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Mindy Hetrick, Service Wildlife Biologist. For further information on the Refuge's eagles please contact her at [Mindy\\_Hetrick@fws.gov](mailto:Mindy_Hetrick@fws.gov))

### Sources:

Personal communication with Mindy Hetrick, Wildlife Biologist, Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge

Colorado Division of Wildlife Website [http://wildlife.state.co.us/species\\_profiles/baldeagle.asp](http://wildlife.state.co.us/species_profiles/baldeagle.asp)

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Website [www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmr/wildlife/endspec/baeafs.html](http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmr/wildlife/endspec/baeafs.html)



### NATURE PROGRAMS

January - March 2005

Reservations are required for these FREE popular programs. Space is limited. Call (303) 289-0930 to register. Please dress accordingly to the weather. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Assistance dogs are welcome.

#### JANUARY

Saturday January 1

Refuge Closed - Happy New Year!

#### Frosty Photo Tour

Sunday January 2 9:00 - 11:00 am

Sunday January 9 9:00 - 11:00 am

Enjoy the abundance of winter wildlife and start the new year with that perfect shot! This time of year is great for photographing birds and mammals.

#### Winter Skies

Saturday January 15 5:00 - 7:00 pm

View Saturn and Jupiter during this special opportunity brought to you by the Denver Astronomical Society. Telescopes and star charts will be provided.

#### Wildlife Wars with Terry Grosz

Saturday January 22

10:00 am - noon

Hear the real-life adventures of author and thirty-two year law enforcement veteran, Terry Grosz, as he spins a yarn or two about his experiences.

A book signing will be held after the presentation.

#### Hunters of the Sky

Saturday January 29 1:00 - 3:00 pm

Hawks, eagles, and owls make the Refuge skies their home. Take advantage of this special raptor tour in search of seven different spectacular hunters, learn about their behavior, and how to identify them.

#### FEBRUARY

##### Winter Exploration

Saturday February 5 1:00 - 3:00 pm

Explore the winter world of snow, ice, and steam through activities focusing on winter safety, wildlife adaptations, weather, snow crystals and more! Recommended for children ages 6-11.

#### Where Eagles Soar

Sunday February 6

10:00 am - noon

Don't miss this opportunity to see our national symbol! During this special tour you may see some of the 100 bald eagles that winter along the Front Range.

#### Sky Tigers

Sunday February 13 9:00 - 11:00 am

Great horned owls are one of the most powerful and secretive birds. You'll have a hootin time learning about these magnificent creatures!

#### Wildlife Watch Workshop

Sunday February 20 1:00 - 5:00 pm

Learn about the skills that make reconnecting with wildlife fun and easy! (See insert for more details.)

#### Birding Basics

Saturday February 26 1:00 - 3:00 pm

Are you a beginning birdwatcher and want to learn more about this popular hobby? Here's your chance to participate in an adventurous outdoor experience looking for Colorado's wintering and year-round birds while learning the best techniques.

**MARCH**

**Tracks & Scat**

*Saturday March 5 1:00 - 3:00 pm*  
Animals leave behind lots of clues to let you know where they've been. Learn to become a wildlife detective and see if you can figure out what animals left their tracks and scat!

**Refuge Manager Tour**

*Saturday March 12  
10:00 am - noon*

The Refuge Manager will fill you in on everything that's going on at the Refuge during this special and unique tour.

**Friends of a Feather**

*Saturday March 19 9:00 - 11:00 am*  
Birders unite! Take our Bird Checklist and search for song sparrows, chickadees, flickers, and other common and uncommon feathered winter and spring dwellers.

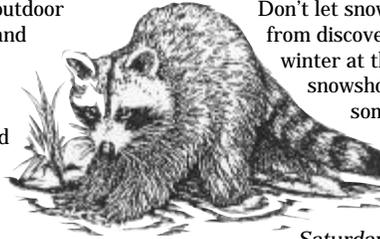


**Kids in the Wild**

*Sunday March 20 10:00 am - noon*  
What is creepy, crawly, slithery, and slimy? You'll find out during this exciting Refuge adventure!

**Scouting for Wildlife**

*Saturday March 26 1:00 - 3:00 pm*  
Calling all scouts - get into the wild at your Refuge and prepare for a day full of outdoor experiences and challenges! Explore the world of waterfowl and mammals, take a guided hike through four ecosystems, and spin the "wild wheel" for a Refuge trivia challenge.



**Shutterbug Tour**

*Sunday March 27 9:00 - 11:00 am*

Get an early jump on your spring photography collection! You won't want to miss the amazing wildlife at the Refuge.

**Wild Rides**

*Saturdays 10:00 am - noon*

*Sundays 1:00 - 3:00 pm*

Enjoy the sights and sounds of the Refuge on this two-hour trolley-tram tour.

**Wild Treks Drop-in Program**

*Saturdays and Sundays*

*8:00 am - 4:30 pm*

Don't let snow covered trails stop you from discovering the beauty of winter at the Refuge! Grab your snowshoes and head out for some "cool" exploring! The trails are open year-round.

**Scout Packs**

*Saturdays and Sundays*

*8:00 am - 4:30 pm*

Our backpacks are filled and ready to be checked-out to help scouts earn their badge requirements.

**Please Note:** Our trolley-tram tour will not be offered on February 20th.



**Directions to the Refuge:**

*Enter the Refuge at 56th Ave. and Havana St. Proceed 1 1/2 miles to the Visitor Center and check-in.*



Become a member of the **Rocky Mountain Arsenal Wildlife Society** and help make a difference for wildlife and the Refuge! Join today by calling (303) 289-0820 or pick up an application when you visit the Refuge.

*Printed on recycled paper.*



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge, Building 111  
Commerce City, CO 80022-1748

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